The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

Entered as second-class matter September 25, 1912, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C., under the Act of August 24, 1912
Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Sec. 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized July 12, 1918

WHOLE NO. 1915 — WILLIAM GREEN, President — WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1947 — GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer — VOL. 37, NO. 51

Holiday Greetings

TAFT-HARTLEY LAW EXPOSED!

By J. ALBERT WOLL and HERBERT S. THATCHER

(Members of the law firm of Padway, Woll, Thatcher, Glenn and Wilson, serving as general counsel for the American Federation of Labor)

This is the sixth of a series of articles to be published by the AFL Weekly News Service in refutation of an article appearing in the Saturday Evening Post which praised the Taft-Hartley law to the skies. Author of the Post article was J. Mack Swigert, law partner of Senator Robert A. Taft—enough said.

NO. 6—THE "SO-CALLED 14 PRIVILEGES" OF THE TAFT-HARTLEY LAW—(Continued)

The prohibition against exerting any form of peaceful economic pressure upon employers and suppliers of non-union employers will go far toward restoring the intolerable evil of the sweatshop and all of the disastrous economic consequences that the sweatshop implies. That is so because in many instances it is impractical or impossible for a host of reasons to establish decent work standards save by peaceful, economic pressure brought to bear on the customers or suppliers of unfair employers who, by their standards, are lending aid to the unfair employers and are thus not exactly neutral.

The operation of a substandard plant means that the fair and honest employer, anxious to maintain decent work standards and adequate mass consuming power, must, out of pressure of competition, either be forced out of business or abandon his fair and humane practices. It means the decimation of one of the most constructive institutions made by organized labor to American progress and the American way of life—namely, the elimination of competitive advantage based upon the exploitation of human beings.

No section of the act more clearly demonstrates the antiunion bias of those who voted in favor of it than the sections outlawing all forms of the so-called jurisdictional strike and boycott.

8. "Opportunity to Bargain in a Craft Union"

It is true that the new law does grant craft workers an opportunity to determine whether they wish to be represented by a craft union or by a union and to that extent it cannot be denied that craft employes have been benefited by the new law. However, it is clear that the new law has not required to establish collective bargaining units on a craft basis, but may do so only if the majority of the craft employes signify their desire for craft representation.

9. "Equality for Independent Unions"

It is next asserted that employes will benefit by the provision remaining independent unions to be given the same consideration as nationally affiliated unions. There is ample room for comment on this provision. Under the Wagner Act, has in fact favored nationally affiliated organizations over independent unions. Examination of the Congressional Record will show in most instances that the so-called "independent" was actually the mouthpiece of a company union which had been under the domination remaining even though in more subtle form. It is often difficult to prove the fact of company domination. The employer usually takes pains to give an established status to numerous independents who are in fact successors to company unions.

10. "Liberation from Communist Control"

The American Federation of Labor can take no issue with the over-all objective of the requirement that officers must execute affidavits disavowing membership in the Communist party if that object is to rid the labor movement of communism. The American Federation of Labor, however, openly can and does take issue with the particular method which Congress has chosen to employ.

It offers a gratuitous insult to the thousands of admittedly loyal officers and representatives of AFL organizations. The requirement is on exactly the same level as if persons were required, as a condition to obtaining access to the federal courts, to file an affidavit that they were not Egyptians, did not beat their wives, or other similar either irrelevant or insulting statements.

Labor Wins Union Shops; NLRB Case Load Climbs

Washington, D. C.—Results of union shop elections conducted by the National Labor Relations Board as required by the Taft-Hartley law show conclusively the utter uselessness of that provision of the law.

Statistics released by the NLRB for its operations during November show that unions won every one of the 112 union shop elections held since enactment of the law. Of the total vote cast, 90 percent favored the union shop. This is ample evidence that union members and their fellow workers have the utmost confidence in labor organizations.

The net effect of these 112 elections has been to waste the taxpayers' money, waste time, build up the backlog of cases awaiting action by the NLRB, and contribute to confusion and ill-feeling in labor-management relations. All this to suit the whimsy of the labor-baiters who prevailed in writing into the law this attempt to destroy the union shop, wreck the principle of union security.

Union leaders predicted that the provision requiring union shop elections would serve no useful purpose and the rank and file have proven them right with their wholesale repudiation of the open shop adherents. It is doubly significant when one considers the near anti-democratic tricks the law's proponents used in requiring that in many instances a majority of all eligible votes, not simply a majority of the votes actually cast, in order to guarantee the right to call an election.

Under this unfair restriction upon the normal democratic method, even the 90 percent of votes cast in favor of the union shop might not have been satisfactory to win the election. If only half of the eligibles participated in the election, even the landslide vote in favor of the union would have gone for naught.

The NLRB report showed additional evidence of the growing strength and influence of unions. In the 153 collective bargaining elections held, 93 percent of the voters favored a labor union as their bargaining agent. This compares with the 70 percent recorded for the preceding month.

In November 1,832 new cases were filed with the NLRB, an increase of 41 percent over the preceding month. This brought the total of cases pending before the board to a new record total of 6,219. Of these, 47 percent were filed since Aug. 22, the effective date of the Taft-Hartley law.

Nation-Wide Telegraph Strike Off; Fact-Finding Board to Study Issues

Washington, D. C.—Holiday messages from the telegraph workers of the nation when the Western Union Company failed to meet the deadline to submit its dispute with the AFL's Commercial Telegraphers' Union to a fact-finding panel thereby averting a strike of 50,000 employes.

A spokesman for the AFL union hailed the company's action a "complete victory for the union." He declared the union had indicated its willingness to submit the issues to a fact-finding board a month ago and that negotiations over the union's demand for a 15-cent hourly wage increase were in progress.

The proposal agreed to by the company provides that a board of inquiry conduct hearings and report findings within 90 days. Main study will be the relationship of company profits to new pay demands.

The announcement was made by Cyrus S. Ching, director of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service.

Ching said the panel would be appointed immediately. After the investigation, he added, the unions will resume negotiations on their 15-cent hourly wage increase with the company.

The panel also will decide whether the unions reopened their contracts on October 1 or November 1. The company raised a question about the date in negotiations conducted with the Government.

Ching said the panel would hear evidence from both company and union officials. He said the question of wage retroactivity—should a wage increase eventually be granted—would depend on the panel's decision on reopening date issue.

The latest proposal of the CTU was presented to the Western Union Company on Sunday, September 21, that time the company made no counter proposal. The union's action today ends in its position until the union is free to call the nationwide strike of its members. Then the company offered a bonus which the union turned down as completely inadequate. Final offer by the union came when word to the company at last agreed to the proposal to submit the case to a fact-finding panel.

Number of Strikers In New York State Reported At Lowest Level In 50 Years

New York City.—The number of strikers involved in work stoppages in New York State is the lowest in 50 years, Industry Commissioner Edward Corsi reported.

Citing the record of labor, management and government cooperation in this state, the Commissioner said strike activity had been declining steadily since the peak year of 1941 through 1946 New York had fewer man-days lost, proportionately, because of strikes than any other large industrial state.

Mr. Corsi said some of the reasons for the postwar era of comparative industrial peace are full employment and wages in the state, widespread union recognition and acceptance by management of collective bargaining procedures, and the state's mediation services.

Of 4,482,000 non-agricultural workers in the state, there were only 300,000 who were not under the protection of insurance in November, the lowest number since V-J Day, the records showed. Factory wages averaged $61.88 for

men and women for the state government.

Steadily increasing use of the State Labor Relations Act was noted by Mr. Corsi. He estimated that 1,200 cases will be handled by the agency and the board by the end of this year, compared with 643 in 1946 and 328 in 1945. Arbitration cases submitted in 1947 will be more than double the 1946 number, he said, which numbered 1,103, compared with 1,278 in 1945 and 1,000 in 1944.

Strike activity in the post-World War II years has been relatively low because of strikes. During 1919-20 following World War I, there were at least 21,955,000 man-days idle, almost 20 times more than the 1,116,000,000 less than than now."

Mr. Corsi said that almost half the strikes were for higher wages and half for shorter work weeks. In the last two years the majority of strikes were for wage increases, with the voluntary living costs and only 6 percent of the stoppages were caused by defactory wages averaged $61.88 for mands for shorter hours.

Marion Hedges, Retired IBEW Official; Honored By National Planning Board

Washington, D. C.—Marion H. Hedges, retired director of research for the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, was honored by the National Planning Association.

Hedges was selected as the recipient of the first of a series of gold medals to be awarded annually by the association to the individual who has made the most outstanding contribution through the science of planning. Abe Murdock of Utah and J. Copeland Gray of New York.

Favorable action was also taken on 20 applications for membership. Dewitt Emery, president of the association, is general counsel for the NLRB.

Mr. Truman gave recess appointments to these men when the first session of the 80th Congress adjourned without taking action on his recommendations.

Additional appointments confirmed by the Senate without objection included those of Cyrus S. Ching, director of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service; David A. Morse, Under-Secretary of Labor, and John T. Ennis, Assistant Secretary of Labor.

Anti-Labor Attitude of American Press Exposed By Musicians' Union Journal

New York City.—The American newspapers' hias against organized labor was exposed in an article which appeared recently in "Allegro," official monthly journal of Local 802 of the American Federation of Musicians.

Richard McCann, president of the local, points the way in which newspapers suppressed the story of employers' wholesale violations of the Wage-Hour law announced several weeks ago by the Labor Department. A full report of the shocking situation was carried in the AFL Weekly News Service.

Because it is of general interest to all members of organized labor to be aware of and to make allowances for the anti-labor attitude found in the American press, portions of Mr. McCann's article follow:

"I raise the issue about the American press double standard because of a little story which recently came to my attention. It's a little story, only because our newspapers make it such a little story. Actually, it is a big story and a shameful story.

"Just think for a moment of how our papers would have sensationalized a story that 20,000 trade union leaders had made a law enacted by your Congress! Just think of the screaming headlines the American press would print! Just think of what Pegler would have said if 20,000 unions had been proven guilty of violating a law which they had to live up to!

"Well, 20,000 American business establishments violated a law last year—the Wage-Hour Law. They were guilty of violating that law and illegally withholding from their workers more than $18,000,000 in wages, money that belonged to the workers. You can dress up this violation of law by the official euphemism, 'but no matter how you slice it—311, 000 workers were cheated out of money they had earned.

"But what American newspaper ever ran a story about this piece of skullduggery? You will search in vain. And this story was no secret. It was sent out as a news release several weeks ago to newspapers and press associations by the Labor Department's Bureau of Labor.

"But the press conspiracy, operating as usual, was too busy denouncing the labor leaders who had given it the treatment it deserved. The newspapers were also very silent when this swindle was reported to them. They failed to publish the news that let the American people know about the fact that 20,000 business crooks had perpetrated.

"Let me also add, that the investigation by the Wage-Hour Administrator was only a mere release of records of the 550,000 establishments covered by the Wage-Hour Law. Only 7 percent could be investigated because Congress refused the administration's appropriation!

"Now should if a tiny investigation of this kind uncovered violations in 311,000 establishments, what investigation—just think of what a real, full-scale investigation would have uncovered in illegally withheld wages!

"Even this investigation even uncovered 200 cases of falsification of records!

"Has anybody gone to jail? No. Has anybody been held up to public shame for this cheating of working people? No."

RENT CONTROL RETAINED BY BOARDS IN 197 AREAS

Washington, D. C.—Acting Housing Expediter, Tighe E. Woods, announced the list of requests for continuation of rent controls from 86 additional local rent advisory boards bringing the total of such requests to 197.

At the same time Mr. Woods said he had disapproved recommendations from the lifting of controls from the Norfolk, Va., area and in Dickinson County, Kansas. Requests for decontrol of the areas were denied because the local boards failed to substantiate them with the factual data required by the Housing and Rent Act of 1947.

"To date the Housing Expediter's office has approved 12 local board recommendations for the decontrol of rents and has disapproved 8. Two requests for an increase in the rent level have been granted with disapprovals recorded in 4 other such cases.

SENATE CONFIRMS MEN NAMED TO LABOR JOBS

Washington, D. C.—The Senate confirmed President Truman's appointees to the National Labor Relations Board. Abe Murdock of Utah and J. Copeland Gray of New York.

Favorable action was also taken on 20 applications for membership. Dewitt Emery, president of the association, is general counsel for the NLRB.

Mr. Truman gave recess appointments to these men when the first session of the 80th Congress adjourned without taking action on his recommendations.

Additional appointments confirmed by the Senate without objection included those of Cyrus S. Ching, director of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service; David A. Morse, Under-Secretary of Labor, and John T. Ennis, Assistant Secretary of Labor.

Cut Prices, Profits and Restore Balance In Pay, Says Council

AFL Demands Participation for Labor In Planned European Recovery Program

Washington, D. C.—The American Federation of Labor urged President Truman to accord labor a definite role in the proposed European Recovery Program.

A committee of top AFL leaders laid before the President a 17-point program for the United States Government's foreign policy which declared that "labor must be adequately represented in the planning, administration and execution of the ERP."

All controls required in the fulfillment of the ERP, the AFL statement said, "are to be planned, directed and executed by the authorized representatives of labor, agriculture, industry, and the Government."

The AFL committee which called upon Mr. Truman consisted of William Green, AFL president; George Meany, secretary-treasurer; Matthew Woll, chairman of the Federation's Free Trade Union Committee, and George M. Harrison, president of the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks.

They told the President that plans were being made for the recovery of the free trade unions in the 16 nations to be aided by the Marshall Plan to discuss ways and means through which labor can contribute to the success of the program.

The AFL program proposed that the American Government adhere to the principle that all free trade unions shall have the inviolable right to determine democratically their political and economic relations.

The AFL spokesmen said that "our Government cannot emphasize too strongly that it is not the purpose of American economic assistance as envisioned in the Marshall Plan to refringe in the least on the national sovereignty or independence of any people."

However, it was emphasized that this policy "shall not be construed or interpreted as encouraging in any sol-

ditional vacation and holiday benefits for union members. Other gains for the union are life insurance and hospitalization benefits, guaranteed replacement of tools and kits in case of theft, paid lunch periods, and improvements in the seniority and grievance provisions of the contracts.

In negotiating contracts a new no-strike clause is included under which companies agree not to use the union shop as a strike-breaking device.

A novel feature of the agreement with the American Enka Corporation allows for the substitution of elective days for any one of the eight holidays so that members of the CIUTW will have more time to cast their vote in the coming elections.

The wage increase granted to the 5,500 employes at Elizabethton and 3,500 workers at Enka Rolls of Rills will boost their income by about $2,000,000 a year.

AFL's United Textile Workers Score Big Gains In New Contracts In South

Elizabethton, Tenn.—Following up its smashing victory over the CIO in a recent collective bargaining election, the United Textile Workers announced the signing of a new contract with the North American-American Bemberg plant here, one of the largest rayon producers.

Meanwhile at Asheville, North Carolina, the union entered into an agreement with the American Enka Corporation, also a rayon producer.

Anthony Valente, president of the United Textile Workers, termed the new contracts, affecting some 9,000 workers, the finest in the industry which "proves that the AFL-UTW keeps its promises and leads the way for the workers in the rayon industry."

The agreements provide a general increase of 14 cents an hour and ad-

Money Lost to U.S. Government Through Tax Evasion Runs Into Billions Yearly

Washington, D. C.—A conservative, businessman's news magazine, the United States News, charged that tax evasion rob the U. S. Government of between $4 and $8 billion a year.

Workers are not involved in this tax evasion, the magazine pointed out significantly.

Those who live on wages and salaries "can be counted on to come clean—to report every penny reported directly to the Treasury," the magazine let it be known.

Because of the wholesale frauds, taxpayers who pay all they owe suffer a penalty imposed by those who play the game, "an all-time high" but that's still only a fraction of the amounts nicked from the public.

"How much the Treasury is able to recover from tax evaders depends on determine how soon the government can get at the records, regardless of individuals must be attained."

PAID VACATIONS PREVAIL IN PAINT INDUSTRY

Washington, D. C.—Paid vacations for paint workers were granted by virtually all establishments engaged in the manufacture of paints, varnishes, according to the results of a survey made by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The typical vacation was 1 week in length after a year's employment, although nearly a sixth of the companies granted 2-week vacations.

Vacation policies for employes with greater length of service were reported by the bureau's agents about one-half of the companies surveyed allowing a 2-week vacation after 3 years service.

Holiday Greetings

Truman Economic Unit Sees High Living Cost As Major Problem

Washington, D. C.—Industrial profits and the benefit of many Americans than ever before, the council asserted that real price competition was the most essential single factor in the process of restoring to proper balance."

Insisting on what it regarded as the basis of sound, healthy economic said:

"In any composite of salutary policies, none is so significant as the encouragement of the forces of real price competition, which means the free operation of the profit motive. It returns in a stable economy rather than in the boom years that the trade will bear in an unstable economy."

The council defined the term "prominent leaders in business and public life" to mean "persons whose public standard work week be lengthened from 40 to 44 or more hours."

The report said many industries were on a continuous-process basis and hours could not be added to their working day, while in some industries affected by a shortage of materials longer hours would aggravate the amount of unproductive labor.

The council stood firm "for the present" for the 8-hour day, 5-day week and 2-week paid vacation.

In contrast to high production abnormally sustained, the council pleaded that maximum production could be maintained indefinitely if properly balanced and profits "are not a major factor in striking such a balance would be the closest possible to the "bottom quarter or third" of the postwar years, when "the economy will skim milk" to enjoy more of the good things of life at a great production."

In stressing "maximum production" the council relegated to second place the idea for the "stabilization era," explaining that the "inadequacy" of goods and services "has not had been demonstrated.

The report added:

"For we were astonished to find, after the country had achieved the idealized figure of 60,000,000 jobs, that the volume of production still was disquieting. And with production shortages, we also found that abundant monetary purchasing power confronted with inadequate supply of goods rather than calling for adequate production."

The economists stated that nearmaximum production today was due to "the abnormal stimulation" such as military expenditures, foreign aid, monetary creation, and the vast wartime backlogs of orders for consumer durables and durable goods.

In view of the abnormal stimulation, the economists further stated that mere acceleration would not solve the problem.

"It (acceleration) will simply add to the time when we shall have to face the problem of what price, income, and property relationships must be established to strike an internally consistent or stable equilibrium," the report said. "It is even clear that in reaching this equilibrium many industrial prices must come down at least in relation to other prices.

"Many rates of profits must subside while reasonable profitability is established in other areas. Gross imbalances in the economy must be rectified by some drawing together of those sets of opposite extremes of the wage scale. Better balances of agricultural and industry, regions and individuals must be attained."

Note to Editors

In view of the Christmas holiday, the supplement edition of the A. F. of L. Weekly News Service for Friday, December 26, will not be published.

The next regular edition of the News Service will be sent to you on Tuesday, December 30th.

The editor of the News Service wishes to take this opportunity to extend his hearty wishes for a Merry Christmas.